

other than a union between one man and one woman, I do not believe a constitutional amendment is either a necessary or proper way to defend marriage.

While marriage is licensed and otherwise regulated by the states, government did not create the institution of marriage. In fact, the institution of marriage most likely pre-dates the institution of government! Government regulation of marriage is based on state recognition of the practices and customs formulated by private individuals interacting in civil society. Many people associate their wedding day with completing the rituals and other requirements of their faith, thus being joined in the eyes of their church and their creator, not with receiving their marriage license, thus being joined in the eyes of the state.

If I were in Congress in 1996, I would have voted for the Defense of Marriage Act, which used Congress's constitutional authority to define what official state documents other states have to recognize under the Full Faith and Credit Clause, to ensure that no state would be forced to recognize a "same sex" marriage license issued in another state. This Congress, I am an original cosponsor of the Marriage Protection Act, H.R. 1100, that removes challenges to the Defense of Marriage Act from federal courts' jurisdiction. If I were a member of the Texas legislature, I would do all I could to oppose any attempt by rogue judges to impose a new definition of marriage on the people of my state.

Having studied this issue and consulted with leading legal scholars, including an attorney who helped defend the Boy Scouts against attempts to force the organization to allow gay men to serve as scoutmasters, I am convinced that both the Defense of Marriage Act and the Marriage Protection Act can survive legal challenges and ensure that no state is forced by a federal court's or another state's actions to recognize same sex marriage. Therefore, while I am sympathetic to those who feel only a constitutional amendment will sufficiently address this issue, I respectfully disagree. I also am concerned that the proposed amendment, by telling the individual states how their state constitutions are to be interpreted, is a major usurpation of the states' power. The division of power between the federal government and the states is one of the virtues of the American political system. Altering that balance endangers self-government and individual liberty. However, if federal judges wrongly interfere and attempt to compel a state to recognize the marriage licenses of another state, that would be the proper time for me to consider new legislative or constitutional approaches.

Conservatives in particular should be leery of anything that increases federal power, since centralized government power is traditionally the enemy of conservative values. I agree with the assessment of former Congressman Bob Barr, who authored the Defense of Marriage Act:

"The very fact that the FMA [Federal Marriage Amendment] was introduced said that conservatives believed it was okay to amend the Constitution to take power from the states and give it to Washington. That is hardly a basic principle of conservatism as we used to know it. It is entirely likely the left will boomerang that assertion into a future proposed amendment that would weaken gun rights or mandate income redistribution."

Passing a constitutional amendment is a long, drawn-out process. The fact that the

marriage amendment already failed to gather the necessary two-thirds support in the Senate means that, even if two-thirds of House members support the amendment, it will not be sent to states for ratification this year. Even if the amendment gathers the necessary two-thirds support in both houses of Congress, it still must go through the time-consuming process of state ratification. This process requires three-quarters of the state legislatures to approve the amendment before it can become effective. Those who believe that immediate action to protect the traditional definition of marriage is necessary should consider that the Equal Rights Amendment easily passed both houses of Congress and was quickly ratified by a number of states. Yet, that amendment remains unratified today. Proponents of this marriage amendment should also consider that efforts to amend the Constitution to address flag burning and require the federal government to balance the budget have been ongoing for years, without any success.

Ironically, liberal social engineers who wish to use federal government power to redefine marriage will be able to point to the constitutional marriage amendment as proof that the definition of marriage is indeed a federal matter! I am unwilling either to cede to federal courts the authority to redefine marriage, or to deny a state's ability to preserve the traditional definition of marriage. Instead, I believe it is time for Congress and state legislatures to reassert their authority by refusing to enforce judicial usurpations of power.

In contrast to a constitutional amendment, the Marriage Protection Act requires only a majority vote of both houses of Congress and the President's signature to become law. The bill already has passed the House of Representatives; at least 51 Senators would vote for it; and the President would sign this legislation given his commitment to protecting the traditional definition of marriage. Therefore, those who believe Congress needs to take immediate action to protect marriage this year should focus on passing the Marriage Protection Act.

Because of the dangers to liberty and traditional values posed by the unexpected consequences of amending the Constitution to strip power from the states and the people and further empower Washington, I cannot in good conscience support the marriage amendment to the United States Constitution. Instead, I plan to continue working to enact the Marriage Protection Act and protect each state's right not to be forced to recognize a same-sex marriage.

THE ONGOING BATTLE AGAINST SLAVERY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to praise the traveling exhibition created by the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, a branch organization of the New York Public Library, in conjunction with the UNESCO Slave Route Project to mark the United Nation's General Assembly's resolution proclaiming 2004 as the International Year to Commemorate the Struggle against Slavery

and its Abolition. To reach a wider audience the Schomburg Center has created versions in French, Portuguese, Spanish, as well as in English. The online version of the exhibition is available on the Schomburg Center website. (<http://www.nypl.org/research/sc/sc.html>)

The exhibition, titled *Lest We Forget: The Triumph Over Slavery*, is a celebration of the extraordinary human capacity to overcome oppression and injustice. Its tour through Africa, the Caribbean, Central and South America and Europe, is a reminder of a heritage that binds people of all races and color, across national and religious boundaries.

Lest We Forget shows us the images of downtrodden degraded people who were stripped of their humanity and culture who were forced to live their lives as mindless, agendaless pawns in vicious, all-powerful systems of human degradation. The transatlantic slave trade was brutal, vicious, denigrating and horrific. It is a representation of one of the most consistent assaults on human dignity and self-worth in the history of mankind.

We see a different kind of slavery today. Guest-workers, lured from third world countries with false promises, are forced to work in hazardous work conditions with very little wages in countries where oftentimes they do not even speak the language. They have virtually no rights as foreign workers and are sometimes forbidden by law to form unions. These modern-day slaves have no recourse but to follow the directives of their employers to exploit their helplessness. The United Nations defines an enslaved person as one whose movement and decision-making abilities are curtailed so that he/she does not have the ability to choose his employer. With this in mind, it is doubly important for us to recall the brutal reality of slavery and systematic degradation of human dignity; and take action in order to eliminate this modern-day slavery.

I commend the Schomburg Center for creating this remarkable presentation, and the UNESCO for making it accessible across the globe. Their cooperation and collaboration has made the exhibition a resounding success, and I hope to see this cooperation repeated and expanded in finding the resolution to the problem of slavery in today's world.

TRAVELING WITH A GLOBAL APPEAL

To mark the United Nations International Year to Commemorate the Struggle Against Slavery and its Abolition in 2004, UNESCO commissioned the Schomburg Center to create a traveling version of its exhibition *Lest We Forget: The Triumph Over Slavery*. The exhibition highlighted the extraordinary capacity of human beings to confront and transcend oppression, and to overcome state-sanctioned injustice.

The traveling version of *Lest We Forget* has toured in Africa, the Caribbean, Central and South America, and Europe. Travelling to countries such as Cameroon, South Africa, Cape Verde, Mali, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, Senegal, The Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Brazil, Sweden, France, Finland, and Norway. To help ensure that the exhibition did indeed reach a wider audience the Schomburg created versions in English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Just as *Lest We Forget* tells a portion of the story about people of the African Diaspora, so too does *In Motion: The African-American Migration Experience*, which originally opened at the Schomburg Center in February 2005. *In Motion* traces 13 different migration patterns of African Americans over 500 years. As part of the Schomburg

Center's ever-expanding Traveling Exhibition Program, In Motion opened at the Lyric Theater in the historic "Overtown" district of Miami, Florida at the beginning of Black History Month.

Miami Mayor Manny Diaz opened the exhibition with a reception and Schomburg Center Chief Howard Dodson was on hand for the unveiling. The exhibition's Miami host Dr. Dorothy Fields, Founder of the Black Archives, History and Research Foundation of South Florida, Inc. knew In Motion would be perfect for her city. "Miami is a city of many people from so many different countries. As soon as you walk in the information about the Haitian migration experience is right there, strategically in the center [of the theater]," said Dr. Fields. "In Motion: The African-American Migration Experience explains that we are all different branches of the same tree."

To guarantee that the exhibition would have a lasting effect, Dr. Fields and her colleagues signed a contract with the county to do a Black History bus tour, which began at the Lyric Theater, this resulted in more than 9,000 visitors in one month. And they even devoted the entire month of May to bring school children to see and learn from the exhibition, and offered two days of teacher workshops with In Motion Project Content Manager Sylviane Diouf, so that educators could prepare their students for the experience ahead of time.

In Motion is set to run at the Lyric Theater until the end of May, Miami's Haitian American Month, but Dr. Fields has confirmed that her organization has plans to expand on In Motion, by providing the Schomburg Center with primary sources on the African Diaspora in Miami to develop another exhibition.

With traveling exhibitions like Lest We Forget and In Motion, the resources of the Schomburg Center reach far beyond its structure to educate and inspire scores of people around the world.

Traveling dates: Lest We Forget

When: May 19–July 19, 2006.

Where: Esmeraldas International Center for Afro-Amerindian Cultural Diversity and Human Development, Esmeraldas, Ecuador.

Organizer: UNESCO Quito's Office.

In Motion: The African-American Migration Experience

When: October 2, 2006–March 9, 2007.

Where: National Heritage Museum, 33 Marrett Road, Lexington, MA 02421

For more information about the Traveling Exhibition Program, please visit www.schomburgcenter.org, or contact Mei TeiSing Smith at msmith@nypl.org, or by calling (212) 491-2204.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE OUTSTANDING PUBLIC SERVICE OF HESTER HILL

HON. JOHN TANNER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a very distinguished volunteer from Tennessee, who was awarded this year's national Humanitarian of the Year award. I want to congratulate and thank Hester Hill, who has given so much time and effort for a very valuable public service program called Angel Flight.

Angel Flight South Central began in 1991, assisting medical patients and their family members with air transportation they could not

otherwise get. It specializes in offering free non-emergency travel for those in need, and the shipment of blood and organs for medical procedures. The travel is provided by volunteers like Mrs. Hill and pilots who offer their time and aircraft at no cost. Last year alone, Angel Flight South Central flew more than 3,000 medical missions at no charge to its carriers. In the weeks following Hurricane Katrina, the rescue group flew hundreds of missions, reuniting people with their loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, Hester Hill has given so much of her time and skill to help others when they need it most. I hope you and our colleagues will join me in honoring Hester Hill for the passionate and dedicated service she has provided to others and congratulate her on this prestigious award she has earned.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO EMILIA GUENECHEA

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Emilia Guenechea for her outstanding efforts to bring awareness to minorities and the underprivileged in Las Vegas.

Over the past ten years, Emilia has served in various positions in her quest to create and implement plans for healthy communities, and she has participated in a variety of programs to assist members of the Hispanic community in Las Vegas. Emilia served as the Woman to Woman Program Coordinator for the YMCA and SAFE HOUSE Shelter, providing a support system for Hispanic women. She also served as the Salud in Acción Program Coordinator, where she was responsible for the planning and coordination of all media production associated with the cancer prevention program for Hispanic women. In addition, Emilia has dedicated two years to the National Cancer Institute's Cancer Information Service Partnership Program as Coordinator for the Northwest Region, where she conducted a comprehensive study to identify gaps in cancer information and education services in order to identify, implement, and maintain partnerships with organizations to serve the underprivileged.

In addition to her outstanding work with the Hispanic community, Emilia has a very impressive academic record. She received her first Master's degree in Clinical Psychology at the Iberoamericana University in Mexico, and her second Master's degree in Counseling from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Emilia is currently the Nevada Cancer Institute's Multicultural Community Outreach and Education Production Manager, a position she has enjoyed since October of 2005. In her role, she develops and implements programs to increase awareness, education, and early detection of chronic diseases. Emilia's main goals are to increase the screening numbers of breast, cervical, colorectal, and prostate cancers, and to increase the participation in clinical trials within multicultural communities. Emilia's hard work is leading to progress in these often difficult and culturally sensitive tasks.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Emilia Guenechea. Her dedication to creating health

awareness has greatly impacted the diverse communities of Las Vegas. She is truly a remarkable woman who should serve as an inspiration and a roll model for us all. I commend her efforts and wish her the best in future endeavors.

FANNIE LOU HAMER, ROSA PARKS, AND CORETTA SCOTT KING VOTING RIGHTS ACT REAUTHORIZATION AND AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. LOUISE MCINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2006

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Chairman, nearly 150 years ago, after a long and bloody civil war, our Nation recognized that minorities should have the right to participate as full citizens in our democracy. Unfortunately, granting a right in the constitution and enforcing that right throughout America are two different challenges, and 100 years later, minorities still have trouble casting a ballot in some parts of the country. In 1965, Congress passed the Voting Rights Act to put an end to the racially discriminatory voting practices plaguing the South, and other parts of the country. Now 40 years have gone by, and some of my colleagues might tell you that we don't need the Voting Rights Act anymore, that we've fixed the problems, and that every adult citizen in this country has the same opportunity to cast his or her ballot.

While I truly wish that were the case, I'm here to tell you that racially discriminatory voting practices are still alive and well in many parts of the United States. For a clear example of why the Voting Rights Act remains relevant and necessary, take a look at Robert Kennedy Jr.'s exhaustively researched article which just ran in Rolling Stone Magazine—I ask unanimous consent to insert a copy of the article into the record. In his article, Robert Kennedy, Jr. lays out a clear pattern of voting irregularities in Ohio in 2004, many of which disenfranchised African American voters in particular. Together, these irregularities may have even played a part in the outcome of the election.

Mr. Chairman, from Buffalo to Rochester, my district is home to some of the most significant moments in the history of the civil rights movement. In 1847, abolitionist Frederick Douglass began circulating the North Star in Rochester, New York. The paper won acclaim from the local printer's union, gave Mr. Douglass a platform to spread his message of civil rights, and demonstrated the successes possible for free African Americans. In July 1905, the Niagara Movement held a meeting in Buffalo during which W.E.B. DuBois authored the Declaration of Principles. This document would later become the basis of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, our Nation's most prominent civil rights organization.

I am proud to represent a district with such a rich history in civil rights, and am fully committed to ensuring that the protections that courageous activists from Buffalo and Rochester worked so hard to achieve are diminished.